

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JOHANNESBURG 0818

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SF
SUBJ: CONNIE MULDER FORGES AHEAD WITH COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTION

1. SUMMARY: MINISTER OF PLURAL AFFAIRS CONNIE MULDER'S DRIVE TO SOFTEN RESISTANCE TO THE SOWETO COMMUNITY COUNCIL AND GAIN ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AMONG MODERATE BLACK POLITICAL GROUPS HAS MET WITH MODEST SUCCESS. THIRTY-EIGHT CANDIDATES FOR THE "SECOND-TIME AROUND" BY-ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN ROUNDED UP, RE-PRESENTING MOSTLY THOSE GROUPS, DORMANT OR OTHERWISE SINCE THE DEMISE OF THE UBC, WILLING TO WORK WITHIN THE "SYSTEM". END SUMMARY.

2. THE BY-ELECTION FOR THE SOWETO COMMUNITY COUNCIL APRIL 15 HAS ATTRACTED THIRTY-EIGHT ADDITIONAL CANDIDATES FOR THE NINETEEN UNFILLED WARDS. MINISTER OF PLURAL AFFAIRS CONNIE MULDER HAS PULLED OUT ALL THE STOPS IN HIS BID TO BUILD UP THE MINISCULE 5 PERCENT VOTER TURN-OUT FROM THE FIRST ROUND OF ELECTIONS, INCLUDING GAMBLING ON THE SUCCESS OF THE RELEASE OF SOME OF THE
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SECTION 10 DETAINEES. HOWEVER, MULDER HAS RETAINED SOME MEASURE OF CONTROL BY HOLDING FORTY-NINE OTHERS, INCLUDING FIVE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE OF TEN, AS "HOSTAGE" AGAINST AN IMMEDIATE OUT-BREAK OF VIOLENCE (ALTHOUGH NONE IS EXPECTED).

3. OF THE THREE PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO OFFICIALLY ENDORSE THE ELECTION (SOFASONKE, MAKGOTLA, RESIDENT'S COMMITTEE), ALL COMMAND

SAME SUPPORT, WITH THE SOFASONKE AND RESIDENT'S COMMITTEE APPEAL-
ING TO THE (RELATIVELY) MIDDLE-CLASS BLACK WHILE THE MAKGOTLA
HAS CONSIDERABLE STRENGTH AMONG THE TRIBALLY ORIENTED WORKERS.
NONE OF THE THREE HAS SUPPORT AMONGST MILITANT GROUPS.

4. THE SOWETO BRANCHES OF THE ZULU CULTURAL/POLITICAL GROUP
INKATHA ARE IN SOMEWHAT OF A BIND, TORN BETWEEN LOYALTIES TO
BUTHELEZI AND THE PERENNIAL DESIRE OF SOME LOCAL MEMBERS TO
"GET A PIECE OF THE ACTION". IT WOULD SEEM BUTHELEZI STILL STICKS
BY HIS REFUSAL TO ENDORSE THE COUNCIL ELECTIONS UNTIL ALL DE-
TAINEES HAVE BEEN RELEASED, IF THEN. BUTHELEZI'S FLIRTATION WITH
THE MILITANTS HAS PROBABLY BEEN COOLED AS A RESULT OF HIS PROBLEMS
AT THE SOBUKWE FUNERAL AND BY THE FACT THAT MULDER HAS MET HIS
DEMANDS HALF-WAY WITH THE RELEASE OF QOBOZA AND MOTLANA. HIS
VIEW (OR HIS INDECISION) HAS NOT BEEN SUFFICIENT TO PREVENT
SOME OLD SOWETO POLITICAL HACKS (AND INKATHA MEMBERS)
LIKE DAVID THEBAHALI AND T.J. MAKHAYA FROM MAKING ONE ADDI-
TIONAL RUN FOR THE ROSES. IT SEEMS THE LOCAL INKATHA WING,
GENERALLY SEEN TO BE CONSERVATIVE, WAS WILLING TO RISK
BUTHELEZI'S DISPLEASURE IN ITS INTEREST IN GAINING LOCAL CONTROL
OF THE SOWETO COUNCIL. AS A CONSEQUENCE, BUTHELEZI APPARENTLY
WENT ALONG WITH CANDIDACIES OF INKATHA MEMBERS IN THEIR
PRIVATE CAPACITIES (ALTHOUGH THEBAHALI RESIGNED FROM INKATHA
TO ANNOUNCE HIS CANDIDACY AFTER BUTHELEZI FIRST DECREED NO
INKATHA MEMBER WOULD PARTICIPATE).

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5. WHILE DR. MOTLANA AND QOBOZA ARE BOTH MAINTAINING RELATIVELY
LOW PROFILES, IT IS CLEAR NEITHER HAS CHANGED HIS ATTITUDE RE
PARTICIPATING IN THE ELCTIONS. ASIDE FROM MOTLANA'S LOW
KEY "WE HAVE NOT CHANGED OUR VIEW", THERE HAS BEEN NO STATEMENT
PRO OR CON ON SUPPORTING THE COUNCIL ELECTION. IT IS AN OPEN
SECRET IN SOWETO, HOWEVER, THAT THESE MEN WOULD REGARD ANY
SUPPORT FOR THE ELECTION AS TREACHERY, SUBJECT ALWAYS TO GENUINE
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